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our own proposal in this instance, especially since Germany agreed to our own proposition in principle. Whether there is a better way of settling international disputes than by lining perfectly good workmen of our nation up against perfectly good workmen of another nation that they may compose national difficulties by blowing each other's brains out, or not, is a practical problem for us here and now. Whatever our grievances, the killing of a few Germans more or less will not lessen them nor ameliorate them.

Of course we must insist upon international law with dignity and consistency, but why war? Why ourselves lunge in to make more pertinent still the ancient words of Grotius quoted herein? Why jeopardize the fame and fortunes of our own educational ideals by joining needlessly in this "brawl in the dark"? In the long run our position of sane and judicial insistence will be justified before the bar of humanity, both in the case of Germany and of Mexico, if we only remain sane and judicial.

AMERICA'S OPPORTUNITY FOR CONTINENTAL LEADERSHIP

By L. S. ROWE

The author of this article is the well-known economist and professor of political science in the University of Pennsylvania. He was a member of the commission which revised and compiled the laws of Porto Rico in 1900; chairman of the delegation of the United States to the First Pan American Scientific Congress which met at Santiago, Chile, in 1908; member of the U. S.-Panama Joint Claims Commission, and secretary of the Second Pan American Scientific Congress, held recently at Washington. He is president of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.

THOSE who have been watching the trend of events in the countries of South America have been deeply impressed with the fact that there exists widespread disappointment that the United States has not taken a more definite position of leadership in the maintenance of the neutral rights of the republics of America. It was confidently expected by the people of South America that the United States would make her cause theirs, and that in so doing there would develop a unity of continental policy which would mark the most important step toward true Pan-Americanism.

The outbreak of the European war came so unexpectedly, dealing such a severe blow to the economic and financial interests of all the republics of America, that the first period of bewilderment was followed by a period of anxious questioning with reference to their position as neutrals. The uncertainties and anxieties of the situation were increased by the presence of belligerent squadrons in the South Atlantic and South Pacific. The question of the interpretation of the rules relating to the shipment of supplies ostensibly shipped in pursuance of legitimate commercial transactions, but in reality intended for belligerent cruisers on the high seas, presented a problem so difficult and delicate that no one country could hope alone to grapple with the problem in a satisfactory way. Similarly, the problem of preventing any of the belligerents from making the ports of South America the bases of operations was an exceedingly difficult one, owing in part to the tremendous coast line, and partly to the inadequate facilities for patrolling.

It was here that the opportunity for real leadership presented itself to the United States, a leadership which would have meant the performance of a lasting service to all the republics of this continent, would have bound them to us with the strongest ties of gratitude, and

would have enabled the American continent to perform an historical mission in defense of the rights of neutrals.

When the war broke out all arrangements had been completed for the assembling of a Pan-American Conference in Santiago, Chile, in October, 1914. All the machinery was, therefore, ready for the holding of a congress of neutrals, which might have performed a great service in the more definite formulation of neutral rights and neutral obligations. This great and unexampled opportunity was permitted to slip by, and the result has been that, owing to the lack of co-operation amongst non-belligerent countries, they find themselves at the mercy of the belligerent powers. The healthful restraint imposed on belligerents by reason of the presence of a vigorous and concerted neutral protest has been lacking, and the result has been a marked and disquieting decline in standards of international dealings.

Although the most effective moment for a united stand of the neutral nations of America would have been immediately after the outbreak of the European war, it is not too late to repair at least some of the damage that has been done. The machinery for such a conference is at hand in the International Commission of Jurists provided for by the Pan-American Conference of 1910. This body should be called immediately, and remain in permanent session as a Congress of Neutrals until the close of the war. Its deliberations and results should have to do with the rights which the neutral nations of America are prepared to maintain and the obligations which they are agreed to fulfill. The mere fact that such a congress is in permanent session cannot help but impress itself upon the imagination of the entire civilized world and on the rules of conduct of the belligerent nations. Not only would such a congress serve to preserve the spirit of legality, but it would bind the nations of America with a community of interest and a community of service which would mark an epoch in the history of international relations.

To allow such an opportunity to slip by is to prove ourselves unworthy of the great mission entrusted to the free nations of America; to announce ourselves unworthy of the great privileges that have been conferred upon us, and to proclaim ourselves unable to defend the highest interests of civilization.